

Preliminary Amendment  
January 18, 2002  
Page 2

IN THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the first paragraph on page 1 of the specification as filed (see lines 7-9 on page 1) with the amended first paragraph on page 1 of the specification, which is set forth below. (Appendix A, which is enclosed herewith, shows how the first paragraph on page 1 of the specification as filed was amended to produce the amended first paragraph on page 1 of the specification.)

new U.S. Pat. No.  
6,466,570

This is a divisional of co-pending U.S. Serial No. 09/077,795, filed on June 5, 1998<sup>A</sup>, which is the U.S. National Stage Application of PCT International Application No. PCT/GB96/03055, filed on 11 December 1996. The present invention relates to a method and apparatus for determining a telephone number for accessing a target entity identified by a number string.

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Please amend pages 16-18 of the specification as filed with amended pages 16-18 of the specification, which are set forth below. (Appendix A, which is enclosed herewith, shows how pages 16-18 of the specification as filed were amended to produce amended pages 16-18 of the specification.)

Internet calling party on the progress of call set to the destination telephone over the PSTN local to the telephone; this feedback need only be in terms of whether or not the call has succeeded.

According to one aspect of the present invention, there is provided a method of determining a telephone number for contacting a target entity identified by a number string, said method comprising the steps of:

- (a) - storing in the domain name system (DNS) of the Internet records each associated with a corresponding domain name and holding a telephone number of an entity associated with the domain name, each said domain name being related to a respective number string from which it can be derived by a process including parsing at least a substantial portion of the number string into at least a part of said domain name;
- (b) - applying said process to the said number string identifying the target entity whereby to form the related domain name; and
- (c) - supplying the domain name formed in step (b) to the DNS to retrieve the telephone number held in the corresponding said record.

According to another aspect of the invention, there is provided a method of determining a telephone number for contacting a target entity, said method comprising the steps of:

- (a) - forming, from a number string identifying the target entity, a domain name by a process including parsing at least a substantial portion of the number string into at least a part of said domain name;
- (b) - supplying the domain name formed in step (a) to the domain name system of the Internet and receiving back from the domain name system a resource record including a

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telephone number.

According to further aspect of the present invention, there is provided a method of determining a telephone number for contacting a target entity identified by a number string, said method comprising the steps of:

- (a) - storing in a DNS-type distributed database system, records each associated with a corresponding domain name and each holding a telephone number of an entity associated with the domain name, each said domain name being related to a respective number string from which it can be derived by a process including parsing at least a substantial portion of the number string into at least a part of said domain name;
- (b) - applying said process to the said number string identifying the target entity whereby to form the related domain name; and
- (c) - supplying the domain name formed in step (b) to the DNS-type distributed database to retrieve the telephone number held in the corresponding said record.

According to a still further aspect of the invention, there is provided a server of the domain name system of the Internet, the server holding at least one resource record that provides a mapping from a domain name to a telephone number of a party associated with the domain name, at least a substantial portion of the domain name being in the form of a number string that has been parsed into plural domain-name labels.

According to a yet further aspect of the invention, there is provided a DNS-type distributed database system holding at least one resource record that provides a mapping from a domain name to a telephone number of a party associated with the domain name, at least a substantial portion of the domain name being in the form of a number string that has been parsed into plural domain-name labels.

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